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S P E E C H

OF THE

REV. DR. BELLOWS,

PRESIDENT OF THE

UNITED STATES SANITARY COMMISSION,

MADE AT THE

ACADEMY OF MUSIC, PHILADELPHIA,

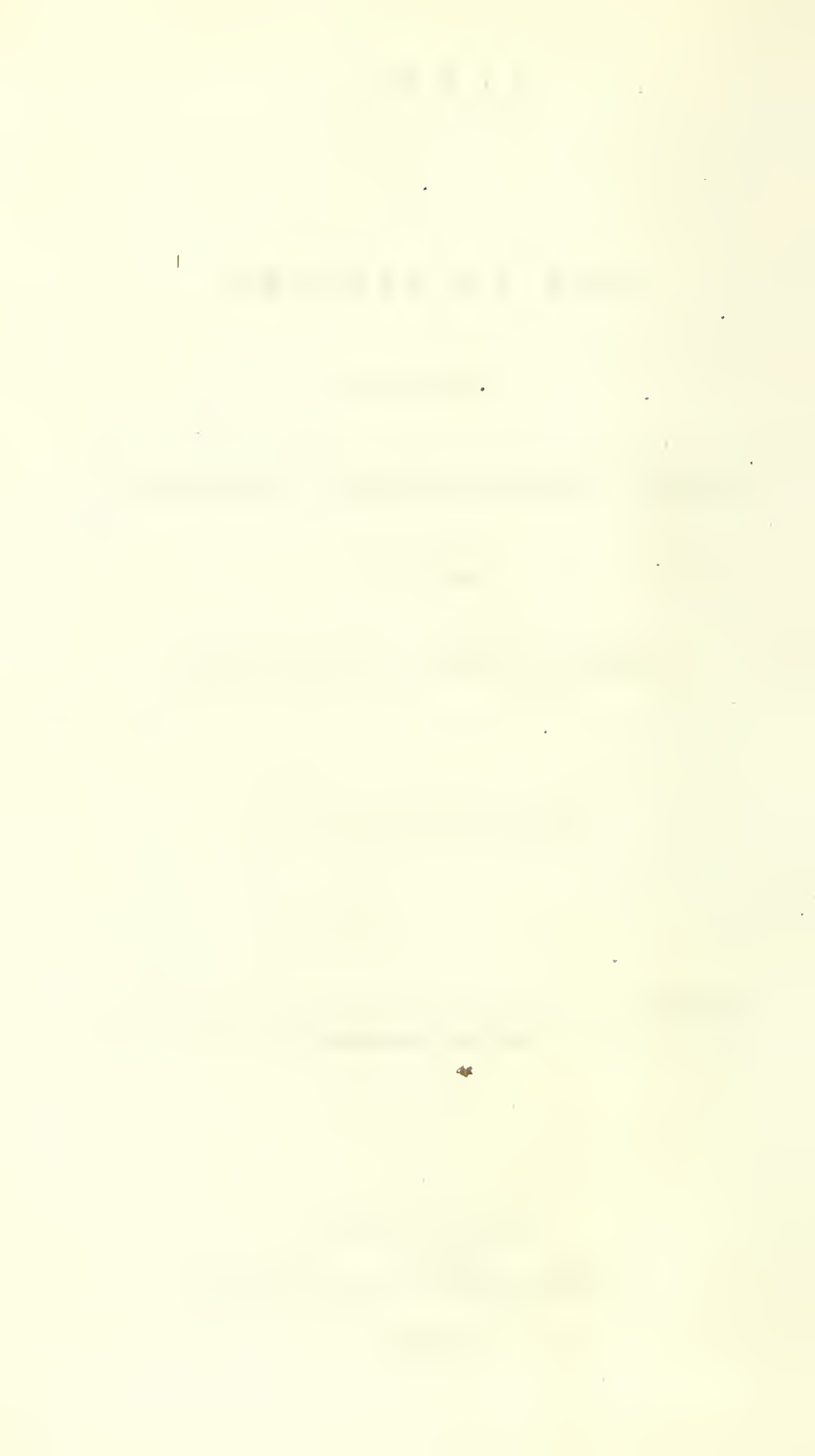
Tuesday Evening, Feb. 24, 1863.

Philadelphia Agency of the United States Sanitary Commission,
1307 Chestnut Street.

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INTRODUCTION.

REV. DR. BELLOWS, President of the United States Sanitary Commission, addressed a large number of the citizens of Philadelphia, at the Academy of Music, Tuesday evening, February 24, 1863, in explanation of the operations of that Commission, over which he so ably presides, and which has earned the praise of every loyal man in the Union, and obtained the approval of every friend of humanity throughout the world.

On this occasion, the first discourse delivered in this city by Dr. Bellows in reference to the Commission, His Honor, Alexander Henry, Mayor of Philadelphia, presided. The Mayor introduced Dr. Bellows, in the following remarks:

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: We have assembled this evening to listen to the narrative of a scheme of benevolence, that in the grandeur of its purpose has rarely been equalled, and in the vastness of its sphere has never been surpassed, in the world's history. [Applause.] That narrative needs no commendation to your attentive ear. Its sphere is that of pouring in oil and wine, to bind up the wounds of those who have fallen by the wayside on the great highway that alone leads

to our national safety and honor. It will be told to you by one whose eloquence is only exceeded by the earnestness, the humanity, and the ripe intellect, that have placed him in the foremost among the laborers in this great enterprise of mercy and of patriotism. I have the pleasure to introduce to you the Rev. Dr. Bellows, President of the United States Sanitary Commission. [Applause.]

S P E E C H.

MR. MAYOR, AND LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

I AM embarrassed in taking my stand in the midst of this splendid assemblage, not by any expectations on your part that I am to indulge at this time in any flights of eloquence,—for this I need not say, you have abundant opportunities of hearing from your own citizens,—your eloquent Mayor, and your patriotic Governor, to whose honied lips I myself have had the pleasure of listening since I came to Philadelphia, and from other citizens in this fair city, equally famed I may say for its science, literature, and its taste, but I am embarrassed by the greatness of the theme which I here undertake to treat, embarrassed even by your sensibilities which I know surround my subject.

I rejoice that I am not called on to inflame, but rather to assuage them. I know that all the rhetoric proper to an occasion like this, lives and moves in your own hearts; it is manifested in the sympathies of every woman in the land, in the feelings of every father who has a son a soldier in the front; in the thoughts, emotions, and affections of every sister, of every brother, of every mother, and of every patriot of either sex in this assembly, and throughout the whole land. It is for me, therefore, trusting entirely to that sympathy and that sensibility, which already exists in your minds and

hearts, to confine myself, as far as possible, to a simple narrative, designed rather to convey that kind of instruction which my own official position enables me to offer you, than anything else.

I am glad that I am here not to advocate any forlorn cause, or to seek to invite your confidence in an enterprise towards which your affections are already slack or cold. I know, on the contrary, that so far as that ministry which I have the honor here to represent,—so far as that institution, the United States Sanitary Commission, is concerned,—the probabilities are that you have all had an exaggerated estimate of its usefulness rather than the reverse. I am not here, therefore, to plead with any particular earnestness, a cause towards which you are indifferent. I am simply here for the purpose of telling you, with some authority, what it has done, and how it does its work ; not how much it has done, but how it works a silent return for the contributions to the cause which Philadelphia has given. Has she not given \$70,000 already to the general treasury of the cause ? and has she not in a thousand other ways, not immediately acting through us, but through her own local methods, contributed to the work of mercy ? To-day I have been mostly employed in visiting, under the kind guidance of a citizen of yours,—one who has distinguished himself alike in this service of mercy, and in his support of the Sanitary Commission, and more latterly by supplying the public with certain views, “How a free people can conduct a long war,” [Applause]—who has done as much as any loyal man of the land to encourage and strengthen the public heart,—under the kind and skilful guidance, I say, of this gentleman, I have been this morning visiting those scenes of mercy and usefulness which the local zeal, industry, and energy of this community have adopted,

to testify its interest in the cause of the sick and wounded soldier, and not only of the sick and wounded soldier, but of the tired soldier and the hungry soldier, who, when he reaches the city of Philadelphia, finds it a friendly city and a welcome home, and its citizens anxious to heap upon him all sorts of luxury, devotion, and gratitude. Those three hundred and fifty thousand soldiers whom you have fed in your Volunteer Refreshment Room,—these and others whom you have received on their way back from the wars, and tended in your temporary hospitals,—no doubt every man of them having the stamp of this city on his heart,—all testify that you have done everything in your power, to assure the soldier of your ardent sympathy and entire and perfect devotion. I doubt, indeed, whether any city in the country has had so great an opportunity as you have had, to testify this spirit of gratitude and devotion to the loyal soldier. You have been nearer to the seat of war, and more directly in contact with the great highway to the army. Every soldier almost who has been to the war, at least in the Eastern Department, has been obliged to cross your threshold. Here he meets his first welcome. Your men and women, your workingmen and professional men, people of all classes, have hastened to give him God speed,—not merely to say to him, “Be ye fed,” “Be ye warm,”—but to fill him and warm him, and send him rejoicing on his way.

The object I have before me more particularly at this time, is to explain in some detail the operations of that Commission over which I have the honor to preside,—an honor which I fully appreciate and value,—and I wish here to say how small a part belongs to me of the credit of placing this Commission in a position of so much usefulness; how numerous and admirable have been the co-workers assembled about

this cause ; how fortunate we have been in securing men of loyalty, fidelity, and skill, to aid us in this work ; how we have not been obliged to put up with eye-servants, but have been able to secure the services, again and again, of men who have filled the most important offices in civil life, but who at the call of duty, took upon themselves the work of this Commission, than which no work was ever before so blessed in the devotion, ability, and skill of those whose sympathies, intellects, and affections have been contributed to its patriotic and philanthropic service.

When I speak of the Sanitary Commission, therefore, I speak of a work that has had the sympathy of hundreds of thousands of men and women ; which has been under the guidance and direction in a large part of the whole civil medical practice in this country ; which has been able to gather about it all the leading spirits in every great community, and the aid and support of the people of every loyal State in the Union, of all its cities and its villages ; which has been enabled to concentrate as in a burning focus, the affections, the understandings, the counsel, and the advice of the loyal and devoted people of the land.

When this war began, the care of our sick and wounded soldiers was, of course, in the hands of the Medical Department of the United States Army. That department consisted at that time of one hundred and fifty excellent surgeons and assistant surgeons, who had been in charge of our military establishment of 20,000 men. It was an admirable department, strong from the knowledge gained in previous wars, during which there had been accumulated valuable statistics. But what were one hundred and fifty medical men ? What was the medical staff of the United States Army, when compared with the exigencies into which the country was then flung,

when not merely 75,000 men were called out, but 250,000 more, then 250,000 more, and then 250,000 more, till our army was expanded to 800,000 men? And how was the medical staff to be recruited? Of course, it had to be recruited from the civil medical service of the country. Just as the military arm had to be recruited from volunteers, generally unskilled and untaught in military arts, so the medical department had to be recruited from the civil medical service. Now you will understand what our difficulties were in a military point of view. Those difficulties have not been mainly due to a want of professional skill in our generals, or to the military defects of the regular army of this country, which in most respects, I doubt not, equals any military service on the globe [Applause], but to the fact that it has been compelled to be recruited by a class of men, not lacking courage, patriotism, or manly qualities, not unfit to claim the peerage in intelligence, zeal, and endurance with any regulars, but because of their inevitable unskilfulness in military arts, due to that long-continued peace with which our country was blessed. We had at once, therefore, to extemporize an enormous army, and extemporize the officers in that army. The wonder is with me, not that we have not done more, but that we have been able to accomplish, in spite of all misgivings and criticisms, in the period of time in which we have been engaged, more than any power on the face of the earth could have accomplished in the same period of time. You must understand that our medical men were in the precise condition of our military men; unskilled in the arts of military life, and of medico-military practice. Now everybody knows that an army must be subjected to the discipline of rigid machinery; a state of things upon which we have looked up to this time with a kind of jealousy. And now I am almost ready to say,

in the face of a general reverse of opinion, that our army has not been so much lacking in leadership, as it has been lacking in those details of discipline and soldierly subordination, which are necessary for the organizing of a great military power in such a manner, that under the lead of a few persons, a vast body of men may be hurled as one man and one soul, at the bidding of one great leading mind, against the enemy. Soldiers are not to be extemporized. They may be called out in a day, but it will take a considerable length of time before they become soldiers.

A soldier is a man who has not merely a willingness to obey, but a habit of obedience,—one trained and disciplined, not by tactics, but by time and experience, in the character and qualities of mind that make him in his very blood and bones like a machine.

Now in the Medical Department of the army, this is just as essential as in any other department. All the difficulties connected with the treatment of the sick and wounded, are due to the fact that the Medical Department of the United States Army, while it has enjoyed the very best ability of the civil medical service from all parts of the country, nevertheless, in a military point of view, was necessarily diluted by the addition of 3000 medical men, with great hearts in their bosoms, and great determination and devotion to duty, but without that particular knowledge of all the regulations and details of army life, that render them able first to understand, then to carry out the wise and admirable regulations already subsisting in the medical service of the United States. Can you wonder that under these circumstances, we have had a thousand defects to contend with in the administration and application of those rich means, which the Government has supplied to meet the wants of our sick and wounded men?

Can you wonder at the failures and defects, belonging in part to the nature of war, which have in some measure attended our operations? What less can you expect, when it is a part of the strategy of an enemy constantly to baffle all the expectations of his opponent. When he knows you mean to have your supplies at this point, and to have a battle here, he will take the greatest pains that the battle shall be not where your supplies are, but where they are *not*, and thus all the plans you may make to meet the exigencies of the case are upset, by that which it is his skill to make the most favorable to himself, and most unfavorable to you. And when you understand that to these difficulties you are obliged also to superadd the rawness of our forces, and the rawness of our officers in the medical department, difficulties for which nobody is to blame, but which have grown out of the mighty blessings of a long-continued peace; can you wonder that a Government, the most generous in the world, in its efforts to meet the necessities of its sick and wounded men, a Government which feels that the people demand of it to do the utmost that humanity can prompt, to render to the suffering soldier as efficient assistance as circumstances will permit; can you wonder that such a Government, which has increased its expenses from 500,000 to 10,000,000 of dollars, for the benefit of the sick and wounded soldier, which has reinforced the medical service of the country, until every possible man that could be spared from medical civil life is now in the army; which by its courts of inquiry, has sifted the medical practice of most of its imbeciles and incompetents; I say, can you wonder that such a Government, so generous, so humane, and so laborious, as it has been in the cause of the sick and wounded soldier, has yet nevertheless found itself continually baffled, continually dependent on^d the exterior support and sympathy of the

public; on having its industry and efforts eked out and supplemented by the benevolence of the public at large?

I know there is a constant wonder on the part of the public, that this great Government, with all its forethought and with all its means, has been compelled to depend so largely and so long upon the benevolence of the public.

Again and again I am asked, how long is this to last? Why does the Government not do this thing and that thing? The answer is, not that the Government does not know its duty, not that it is not anxious to do its duty; but let the Government do all it does or can do, you cannot have 800,000 men in the field, under the circumstances in which our men are in the field, without there being (even after all that public and private benevolence combined can do), a large margin of want and misery, which can only be partially alleviated. I tell you, therefore, on the responsibility of one who under the most favorable circumstances has been studying this matter for two years, you need not fancy there can be by any possibility, any stoppage in the demand upon your sympathy or support, so long as this war lasts. Every loyal woman in this country, every generous merchant, every noble-minded physician, every man who loves humanity, every man who loves his country and our noble cause, has got to put by a certain portion of his time, and a certain portion of his money and industry, and a large portion of his heart and affections and sensibilities, for the benefit of the sick and wounded soldiers. No matter how generous the supplies, no matter what amount of money the Government may spend, no matter how earnest and active and generous may be the labors of the women of the land, there will still remain in force that Scriptural maxim, "The poor ye have always with you,"—the sick and wounded soldier will always be with

you; and after all the Government and public and private benevolence may do, your hearts will be torn and your dreams haunted by the fact that there still remains a large and frightful amount of unalleviated disease and sorrow and want. Now, I ask you to discharge from this moment from your minds all notions to the contrary of this statement, which is vouched for on the authority of a Commission which has been now nearly two years studying the question. But let me tell you that all that private or social benevolence can do for the army in the field is invisibly small, compared with that which the Government is able to do, being in possession of all the lines of transportation and master of all the facilities, and compelled to exclude the larger portion of the public from the actual scene of war. You have between you and the soldiers the military lines which you cannot pass; the soldiers are principally to the front, out of your immediate reach, away from your own eyes and beyond the easy reach of any comforts you may send them. The great channel by which to reach them must be the Government itself; and let me tell you, that to sustain the Government you must encourage and support the medical force of the army itself. Everything possible should be done to make the medical force strong in its efficiency; not to interfere with the regulations adopted by the army surgeons, but in every way to sustain and encourage them in the great work committed to their charge. This is your only chance of being very useful to the soldier, except in particular, irregular, and exceptional cases. You must not suppose that because in this loyal city of Philadelphia, as your soldiers come and return, and you have them under your eye, you can take care of them here, that any similar state of affairs exists near the scene of conflict. There, a different state of things arises. The suffering

of the army is on the field of battle, or in the actual camp or general hospital. The general hospital must be for the most part solely under the eye and sympathy of the United States Army Surgeons. If those who have this business for their official duty are not encouraged and sustained, all that you can do in irregular ways is as a drop in the bucket. Let me say, therefore, and I desire to say it in correction of an error which I fear prevails largely, that notwithstanding these natural defects which proceed from the want of official training, you may place a general reliance in the personal character, in the devotion and the patriotism, and in the medical skill of the surgeons in the field. There has been a prevailing impression that these medical men, to a large extent, have been the riff-raff of the profession; there has been an extraordinary notion, that although they have been culled out of Christian society, they have been suddenly converted as by a moral contagion into barbarians and demons. I suppose that an ordinary percentage of imbecility and lack of moral principle and of ignorance of medical science, prevails in the medical profession, in the army and among the volunteer surgeons, as it prevails in every class of society. But, I presume to say, that it is an atrocious libel, that as a class, the surgeons are not a self-sacrificing, earnest, devoted body of men, and I may add, the hardest worked class of men connected with our army service. After a very general experience of them, I think it is high time to say, that the country ought to have a general reliance, confidence and trust, in the essential worthiness, devotion and admirable character of the medical staff of the army now in the field.

Let them, then, be sustained. After a while they will learn the rules, regulations, and method. They found at first, that the army regulations were a little annoying.

They went into the field with a prejudice—not unreturned—against the regular officers; but they began to see, after a while, that army regulations were very wholesome things,—consisting, indeed, of those methods and rules which experience has proved to be the shortest road to efficiency. If anything is now plain, it is that unless you have method and rule, and pretty rigid method and rule, in the army, you can have no success.

And if there be anything that volunteers learn in the medical or other service, it is, after a short time, an increasing respect for army regulations; a desire to be under officers that understand these regulations; to be under surgeons who are familiar with all those minute rules, that tie up in safety and security, for purposes of method, order, and success, the conditions under which relief is to be supplied. I know nothing more foolish and insane, than that universally popular cry against “red tape.” Permit me to say, that in the army, red tape is as essential to men, as white tape at home is to women. [Laughter.] I need not say, that it is an equal folly to attempt to do without the one, as to do without the other. Instead of decrying “red tape,” all my experience has taught me to believe that the principal difficulties connected with the humane administration of army affairs, are due to the neglect of “red tape.” If you could have real “red tape,” not that kind painted on barbers’ poles, which ties up nothing; if you could only have real rule, method, and habit carried out to the death even, you would have the surest way of attaining to the best results in military affairs. And that is a matter that ought to be more generally understood among the women and the men in the land.

The women—God bless them!—think that it requires

nothing but a good and loving heart to aid the poor soldier. But I can assure you, that however ardent and warm the heart, its pulsations, to be effective, must be regulated by order and method.

There has been a general sort of ery in the newspapers, which has found its way into our homes, against this discipline of which I speak. When I first went into this business, I was under the influence of the same prejudices. I thought I must take the sharp knife of criticism, and the sword of antagonism, and with them cut loose everything that prevented me from getting at the sick and wounded soldier. But I found it was best, on the whole, instead of doing anything to weaken the bonds of order, and the regulations adopted by long experience in all wars, for the guidance and direction of military affairs, to accept the order and method established by the Government, and endeavor to work in perfect harmony and sympathy with them. And if the Sanitary Commission has achieved any triumph in this war, it has been entirely owing to the fact that it has followed the regulations of army life; that it has endeavored to enter into affectionate and friendly relations with the medical body in the field; to do all its work under the sanction of the Government itself; to aid in the proper carrying out of the regulations of the service; and to respect that honest jealousy of all outside interference and supplementary aid, natural to men in official position; that wholesome *esprit du corps*, which confesses no weakness or defect,—a generous sentiment, and one which every man ought to have something of, in public place. All that has been conquered. The Sanitary Commission, looked upon at first with some want of sympathy at Washington, by the War Department, and by the generals in the field,—for I have been often compelled

to listen unwittingly to army men talking of the Sanitary Commission as a sentimental body of persons, really only to be countenanced because, somehow or other, they had managed to get the affections of the people,—is now, I am proud to say, and so far as I know, in the most cordial and perfect relations of friendship and co-operation with the Medical Department of the United States Army, with the authorities at Washington, and with all the generals in the field. [Applause.]

This is due to the good fortune of having, from the start, adopted the true method. Therefore, the longer we labor, the better the scheme works; the more harmonious it is; the more entirely it finds itself adapted to do the work which it undertook to do. And let me say, that those not enjoying these facilities, naturally looked at with a kind of jealousy and distance by generals and officers in the field, and by the Medical Department itself, must necessarily work under constant disadvantages, and their sources of usefulness be greatly impaired. The earnest efforts of associations of noble men and women all over the Union, seeking to do good, have thus been weakened. Thank God that they exist! May His blessing rest upon them all! It is a source of wonder, that with all the difficulties necessarily attendant upon their unsystematized labors, they have been able to do so much; that such excellent results have accrued from their labors.

The work which the Sanitary Commission undertook, is one which ought not to excite much jealousy among other associations. I will describe it in a few words.

The work was twofold. It was first to prevent sickness in the army. The sympathies of the public are with the sick and wounded, but we devoted almost our exclusive energies to that in which the public sympathies are not greatly en-

listed, namely, in efforts to enlighten the army,—to enlighten the quartermaster and the commissary and the soldier in the field on the importance of taking every possible means of preventing a waste of precious life. We knew that a great proportion of the waste of life in the army was owing to ignorance of the laws of health, and the consequences of those particular exposures and dangers that are peculiar to an army in the field. How should officers and men become acquainted with this matter, unless they had given special attention to the subject? We went to work, therefore, at the very start to prevent disease, by sending into the army a set of experts, selected from the very best medical talent in the country, and paid liberally for their services. For be it remembered, that they were taken from remunerative posts in private life, taken from families dependent on their care, and from spheres of large private practice. We trained them to this special duty, and sent them as far as possible into every corps of the army, to diffuse a knowledge of camp life, to acquaint the men with the proper manner of managing everything connected with the peculiar dangers and difficulties surrounding soldiers in the field. In order to accomplish the end desired, this matter had to be made a subject of careful study. The Sanitary Commission undertook to prepare a series of questions, covering every point that can be named respecting the interests of the soldier. Three hundred questions were prepared, which these persons were to carry into camp. After obtaining leave of the Major-General, the Brigadier-General, and the Colonel of each regiment, they went to every officer of the camp, and asked him every possible question connected with the welfare of his men. The object in asking these questions was in a negative manner to convey information, to convey to these people in a manner

inoffensive to themselves, everything in regard to camp life which it was necessary for them to know. Our inspectors went through five hundred and seventy distinct and separate regiments, and many of them twice and thrice over, besides special inspections, and left with them catalogues and publications, to the extent of some hundred thousands, and thus was diffused through our whole army much valuable information, which has no doubt in a great measure, made our army, in spite of all the diseases that have raged there, the healthiest army in effective service the God of battles ever looked down upon. I will give you the chapter and the verse. At no time since the war began, has the average mortality been more than six per cent. Well, now, in the Crimean army, the mortality was twenty-three per cent.; in the army on the Spanish peninsula under Wellington, the mortality was sixteen and one-half per cent. The mortality of our army has been reduced by influences which have been exerted, God knows how, we trust in some degree through our instrumentality, to six per cent. as the general average and rule. Whether this be due to the beneficence of the Government, or to the admirable arrangement of the commissariat, to the abundance of clothing with which our soldiers have been blessed, to a greater degree than any other soldiers in the world, or whether, perhaps, it is owing to the versatile and self-protecting character of the American people, or to the favorableness of the climate, or to the painstaking efforts which have been used by the Sanitary Commission, to disseminate widely the most reliable information through the whole army, is not for me definitely to say; but by the blessing of God, all these means having been used, our army, now near the end of its second year, is the healthiest army by far that ever has been in the field.

In making our inspections, a large mass of statistics has

been collected, which are now in our archives at Washington, throwing light upon questions of great interest, which will go far to settle many points which, after the war is over, the socialist may raise, or the statesman, in regard to the conduct of the war.

These facts have been acknowledged by scientific men in Europe. It has been confessed in the London *Times*, which never speaks any good of us if it can help it, that we have achieved in this respect, a work never before undertaken. We sent into the army, before there was a single sick man in it, a body of men (the United States Sanitary Commission), whose duty it was to inquire and advise as to everything necessary for the health of the army about to enter the field. We did not wait, as other governments wait, until the horse had been stolen, before we locked the stable-door. We did not appoint a Commission, after a year of ravage, to find out how so many lives had been thrown away; but, with a spirit characteristic of American forethought, we selected a body of men at the start, before a single life was exposed, to suggest the means of preventing any needless waste of human life during the war.

Now, to turn to that which is most important to you,—the means of healing our sick and wounded. When this war broke out, nobody could have failed to anticipate a magnificent uprising of the sympathies of the whole people towards the soldiers in the field. We asked ourselves,—What can we do to help the Government take care of the sick and wounded men? We foresaw that there would be a rush of philanthropic men and women to the hospitals and to the field. It occurred to us then, at the outset, that it was important to organize the spontaneous beneficence of the country; to weave it together, and make it in the end work

like well-regulated machinery,—doing the greatest possible good, with the least amount of embarrassment to the authorities. We proceeded therefore to organize this beneficence, that its results might be regularly, economically, wisely, and kindly utilized for the good of all.

While disloyalty and rebellion were tearing the States in pieces, and the disintegrating processes of secession were going on, we endeavored to concentrate the benevolent sentiments of loyal men. We knew that something must be done to unite the whole heart and industry of this people in a common work; to persuade them to lay aside their local and municipal pride,—sentiments which, in times of peace, rightfully prevail; but in a time like this, when the national idea was growing weak, under the distracting influences which unfortunate political events had introduced into the country, we thought we might be an humble means, through the associated sympathies and systematized benevolence of all parts of the loyal States, in assisting the National Government in sewing up the wounds of the country. It was all-important to render this Federal idea operative on the beneficence of the country, so that we could counteract those secession influences which were rending asunder that which God had originally joined.

I confess that almost the only discouragement attendant upon our work has been some inability on the part of the public to enter fully into that lofty idea. We all have our municipal pride. We all have a love for our individual States; and to overcome this love to some extent, for the time, in favor of a broader affection, was a part of our mission. In ordinary times, it is well to trim the lamp of domestic affection; to feed the fire of municipal pride; to tend the larger altar of State rights. But at a time

like this, we ought to bring every particle of patriotic fuel we can, to make that central flame which our fathers kindled on the Federal altar, burn brighter, so that the nations of the world, who are watching with jealous eyes from every headland of Europe to see its glory eclipsed, may find it surging up with a double splendor, and shedding an immortal radiance upon the whole horizon of humanity.

Now, in regard to the supplies we have received from the country. I will not go into very great length about that matter at the present time. We know that in Philadelphia you have been doing as much as any city in the country, for the sick and wounded soldier. We do not wish you to abstract one particle of your industry nor one moment of the time which you have given to the soldiers, from those to whom you already stand pledged. I am not here to depreciate or underrate any service in which you have been thus far so nobly engaged. As for me, I know no State soldier; I know no Philadelphia soldier; no Pennsylvania soldier. I know only the Federal, Union, National soldier. [Applause.]

You have more than 200,000 noble Pennsylvania soldiers in the field; and I was glad to hear from the lips of your Governor, last night, that you have 150,000 more just such, ready to take the field, when wanted.

These soldiers, until they got into the field, were Pennsylvania soldiers; and so long as they were in Pennsylvania camps, and so long as they were near home, they were within reach of your local associations. You could send your agents among them, who could administer to their every want. But you should recollect, that after a soldier gets into the general field, he is not a Pennsylvania soldier; he is a National soldier. And when he is sick and wounded, he is not under the control of Pennsylvania officers, nor is he within reach

of Pennsylvania nurses. He is not in the Pennsylvania hospital; he is in the Federal hospital. You do not know where he is. Your Governor does not know where he is. The colonel of his regiment does not know where he is.

When the soldier falls, he is taken to the rear, and sent to the most convenient hospital. How are the sick and wounded of the Pennsylvania regiments to be taken care of? Only by an association which claims in some sense to be omnipresent; which, with its supplemental supplies, undertakes,—according to some proportion of the supplies furnished it by the community at large,—to meet the necessities of every soldier, no matter whether he comes from Pennsylvania, Michigan, Iowa, or any other State in the Union.

Your agent may be sent into the hospitals, we may say in Washington, in search of a Pennsylvania soldier. He comes across a soldier in the ward, and inquires, “Are you a Pennsylvania man?” “No, I am not a Pennsylvania man, but I am a sick man.” “Well, somebody will take care of you, but I want to find a Pennsylvania man.” “Well,” says the poor soldier, “there is a Pennsylvania man over in the corner.” The agent then addresses him, “Are you a Pennsylvania man?” “Yes.” “Well, here are some things I have brought you.” He takes them, and as the agent is about to walk away, the sick hero says, “Here is a good friend of mine in this next bed, with whom I have had much comforting chat; can’t you do something for him?” If the agent says No, it is very likely the Pennsylvania man refuses to accept the good things that are brought him. The object of the Sanitary Commission is to make every soldier feel that he has an equal share in the bounty with which this nation supplies its soldiers. If you should look into this question thoroughly, you would find that while the work in neighbor-

hoods where soldiers are stationed, may require State associations and private enterprise, there is still a great and immense field of Federal and National work, which can only be done by a Federal and National association. Therefore, without asking you to diminish your sympathies directed under the auspices of local associations, I do demand of you, not as Pennsylvanians, but as Americans, in the name of the Federal soldier, that you appropriate a certain portion of your benevolence to a purely National and Federal work. I am sure the mere statement of the question is its argument, and it is not necessary for me to debate the question a moment longer.

In regard to special relief, let me say that during the past month, five or six thousand men from one hospital (Light House Point), have been discharged. The Government has decided that under law, it cannot take charge of discharged soldiers. They accordingly often find themselves without the means of transportation. A discharged soldier is in the city of Washington, anxious to go to his home, and what does he do? Does he look for his State agent? If he does, he is probably told to go to the Sanitary Commission, and we must in the end send him safely to his home. The Commission has six or seven lodges in the City of Washington, for the purpose of receiving these men. At the Paymaster's office, there is a particular lodge to receive the soldier waiting to receive his pay. Here we have beds where the soldier can remain until he reaches his turn on the pay-roll. For a month past, we have had five hundred and fifty men per night to take care of, and supplied eighteen hundred meals every day to these discharged soldiers. We have made arrangements with all the railroad companies to take these men home at Government fare. Through the kindness of Mr. Felton,

President of the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad, we are now having cars constructed, in which stretchers can be hung, so that the wounded soldier lying thereon, can be carried safely from Washington to New York, without any jarring to his shattered frame.

I thank you for the very kind attention you have given me, and take my leave with the cordial hope and confidence, that this community will add to all the other blessed things which it has done for the sick and wounded soldier, this other thing. I appeal to the noble clergy of this city, and shall be glad to have the co-operation of the patriotic women of the city of Philadelphia. I would suggest a meeting of the clergy at an early day. Let each of them bring one or two competent women, in order that the benevolent feeling which has been manifested at this meeting, may be turned to practical account. I know that the women of Philadelphia do not mean to be one step behind the women of the other cities of the country. You will have the sympathy and encouragement of your Governor, your Mayor, the clergy, and the leading citizens, in undertaking this important work. We must have our storehouses filled up again and again, and I am sure I misread these generous and humane Federal countenances, which I see before me, if I am mistaken in anticipating that henceforth, in the city of Philadelphia, the Sanitary Commission will not only have the cordial support of its citizens, and the countenance of the clergy, but that the nimble fingers of the women of the city will devote a certain portion of the day in filling up the indispensable requirements, caused by the presence of so vast a force in the field, subject to all the uncertainties, disappointments, and embarrassments of the Government service in a time of active campaigning.

I cannot close these observations without calling your attention for a moment, to the recollection of one whose memory is sacredly honored in the Sanitary Commission, and will be found inscribed conspicuously on the roll of a nation's gratitude, when the records of the war are made up. I refer to the late Mr. William Platt, who may truly be called a martyr to his patriotic zeal and earnest humanity. Carried beyond his strength, by his passionate devotion to the wants of our sick and wounded soldiers, he fell stricken by disease contracted on the battle-field, where he went as a minister of mercy. No soldier falling by the bullet of the enemy was more a victim of patriotic courage and zeal than he. This community marked his modest, yet unweariable services, too well to need any eulogy upon his work from me. His associates here, whose hand he so long was, have testified in every form their respect for his memory, and their sorrow for his untimely loss. It is not for a stranger to his person, as I was, to strew any fresh flowers upon his recent grave; but I should do injustice to the Sanitary Commission, if I did not take this public occasion to utter, in this, his own city, and among these, his own friends, these few feeble words of tribute to so faithful a servant of our cause, and so lamented a philanthropist and patriot. Peace to the ashes of William Platt! "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

After the close of Dr. Bellows's speech, the Rev. John Walker Jackson, by invitation of the Committee of Arrangements, addressed the audience in words of ardent and most patriotic encouragement, which were earnestly applauded.

The orchestra then played the National Hymn, and the whole audience joined in singing the chorus, with the most intense enthusiasm, and the large assemblage then retired.

APPENDIX.

It has been thought advisable to annex certain statistical information to the report of Dr. Bellows's speech, in order that an outline of the character of the work of the Commission, and its vast extent, may be exhibited by figures.

I. SUPPLIES.

From July, 1861, to October, 1862, it has distributed,—

Articles of clothing,	745,091
Other articles, food, stimulants, and various appli- ances for the comfort of the soldier, about	100,000
	<hr/> 845,091

II. RECEIPTS IN MONEY.

The whole amount received to March 1, 1863, . . . \$680,837 16

The following table shows the sources from which this sum was derived.

Total amount of donations received by the Treasurer of the United States Sanitary Commission, to March 1, 1863, and the sources from which they came.

New York,	\$89,046 67
People of New England,	6,683 75
Maine,	14,324 43
New Hampshire,	621 90
Vermont,	1,890 81
Massachusetts,	44,131 57
Rhode Island,	7,558 30
Connecticut,	2,588 35
New Jersey,	2,356 74
Pennsylvania,*	10,716 39
Delaware,	10 00
Maryland,	15 00

* This does not include the whole amount of money received by the Philadelphia Associates. The contributions at the Agency were \$56,580, a large portion of which was expended by the Associates for supplies under the orders of the Central Commission.

Washington, D. C.,	\$4,545 83
Ohio,	2,200 00
Indiana,	500 00
Illinois,	500 00
Michigan,	516 00
Minnesota,	25 00
California,	449,453 80
Oregon,	23,005 34
Nevada Territory,	4,000 00
Washington Territory,	4,520 77
Vancouver's Island,	1,325 20
Honolulu,	3,585 00
Canada (Toronto),	439 48
England,	1,100 00
France (Paris),	2,400 00
Unknown sources,	2,776 83
	<hr/>
	\$680,837 16

A considerable portion of the above sum of \$680,837 16, of course, has been expended in the purchase of such supplies as could not be provided by the homes of the land, but nearly all the clothing, material and workmanship, has been the freewill offering of the loyal women of the country.

III. INSPECTIONS OF CAMPS.

Between July, 1861, and October, 1862, the whole number of camp inspections made with a view of ascertaining their sanitary condition, by the agents of the Commission, was 1060. These 1060 inspections represent 570 distinct regiments or bodies of troops.

The importance of this department, and the admirable results which have flowed from its thorough and efficient management, are pointed out in the foregoing speech.

IV. INSPECTIONS OF GENERAL HOSPITALS.

This subject has received the earnest attention of the officers of the Commission, and they have employed fifteen surgeons of eminence, who have made a thorough investigation of the condition of the hospitals at Washington, Baltimore, Annapolis, Frederick, Cincinnati, Louisville, Philadelphia, and New York. The vast improvement observable of late in all our military hospitals, is due to

the intelligent measures adopted by the present able Surgeon-General, which were based in no small degree upon the reports of these Inspectors of the Commission.

V. AGENTS WITH THE ARMIES IN THE FIELD.

To carry out fully the National idea of the Commission, each army, wherever stationed, has been attended by a permanent staff, representing the benevolence of the country as distributed through the agency of the Commission.

In each army this staff is composed of a principal inspector, assisted by an adequate force of relief agents. These gentlemen form part of the permanent organization of the army; the supplies are under their control, and the zeal, efficiency, and devotion which characterize them in the performance of their duties, and the vast benefit which has resulted from their systematic and judicious distribution of the supplies in cases of emergency, are vouched for by the reports of all the officers of the army, medical and military, who have been eye-witnesses of their labors.

Here is General Rosecrans's late order on the subject of the Commission :

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE CUMBERLAND,

MURFREESBORO, February 2, 1863.

The General commanding presents his warmest acknowledgments to the friends of the soldiers of this army, whose generous sympathy with the suffering of the sick and wounded has induced them to send for their comfort numerous sanitary supplies, which are continually arriving by the hands of individuals and charitable Societies. While he highly appreciates and does not undervalue the charities which have been lavished on this army, experience has demonstrated the importance of system and impartiality, as well as judgment and economy, in the forwarding and distribution of these supplies. *In all these respects the United States Sanitary Commission stands unrivalled.* Its organization, experience, and large facilities for the work are such that the General does not hesitate to recommend, in the most urgent manner, all those who desire to send sanitary supplies to confide them to the care of this Commission.

They will thus insure the supplies reaching their destination without wastage, or expense of agents or transportation, and their being distributed in a judicious manner without disorder or interference with the regulations and usages of the service.

This Commission acts in full concert with the Medical Department of the army, and enjoys its confidence. It is thus enabled, with a few agents, to do a large amount of good at the proper time, and in the proper way. Since the battle of Stone's River, it has distributed a surprisingly large amount of clothing, lint, bandages, and bedding, as well as milk, concentrated beef, fruit, and other sanitary stores, essential to the recovery of the sick and wounded.

W. S. ROSECRANS,
Major-General Commanding Department.

Among the many testimonials to the value of the system adopted by the Commission in carrying out its work in the army, we select that of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church.

This highly respectable body, representing a numerous and most influential denomination of Christians in all parts of the North and West, adopted, at its meeting in Cincinnati in May last, the following resolution :

Resolved, That the Assembly earnestly recommend to all our Presbyteries and Churches, the United States Sanitary Commission as the very best channel through which to reach the sick and wounded of the army. It is thoroughly organized, possessed of all needful facts, and is now acting with that system and economy which only an enlarged experience can secure.

VI. SPECIAL RELIEF AT WASHINGTON.

This department may be divided into the following branches :

1. *The Hospital Directory*, or complete list of the inmates of the military hospitals in the Washington District. By means of this directory the actual position and condition of any sick or wounded soldier may be readily ascertained. Arrangements are being perfected to introduce this directory system at all points, East and West, where there are large hospitals. The advertisement of the Directory Department will be found on the third and fourth pages of cover.

2. *The Soldier's Home at Washington*, intended for the relief of those soldiers passing through that city, who become separated from their regiments, but who are not ill enough to go into the hospital. A night's lodging and a few meals have refreshed and cheered more than eight thousand five hundred soldiers at this Home.

3. *Help of various kinds to discharged Soldiers*. In his weakened state the discharged soldier is little able to go through the formal-

ties and delays incident to getting his pay, and he is liable to be imposed upon by sharpers, who seek to appropriate to themselves the larger portion of his hard-earned pittance. With the cordial concurrence of the officers of the Government, *lodges* have been established by the Commission, near the Pay Office, where the feeble soldier may rest while waiting his turn, and he there receives such advice and assistance as may enable him to procure the pay due him with the least possible delay.

4. *An Agency for the collection of any Bounty, Pension or Back Pay due the Soldier.* The importance of this department of relief is obvious, and it is increasing every day. Claims of this kind should be in the hands of prompt, efficient, and above all, honest agents. The Commission undertakes this as one of its special works of mercy, and there is none of greater practical value.

5. *The Through-ticket System.* Arrangements have been made by the Commission, by which tickets on all the principal railroads, are sold to the soldier at a reduced price, conveying him from his point of departure to the point nearest his home. This enables him to reach home speedily, and without the necessity of exhibiting his money at the various stations, and is thus a means of guarding him against temptation or robbery on the road.

Hospital Cars, properly fitted up, have been placed by the Commission on some of the roads, by which the wounded soldier is conveyed to distant hospitals with a proper regard to his comfort and the dictates of humanity.

THE PHILADELPHIA AGENCY OF THE UNITED STATES SANITARY COMMISSION.

This Agency has been recently reorganized, with a view of rendering it more efficient. The Supply Department has been transferred to an Association, called "The Women's Pennsylvania Branch of United States Sanitary Commission." This Association proposes to establish auxiliary societies in the various churches of the city, and in the towns in Eastern Pennsylvania and in New Jersey, who shall send to them their contributions of clothing and other necessities for distribution by the Commission. The plan is fully laid down in the following extract from a letter from Dr. Bellows :

"Whatever you may hitherto have been doing, from this time con-

sider how you can best and most surely reach the suffering soldier, where he is most exposed and most forgotten. Organize a circle in your church, your village, your town. Draw in as many loyal women as you can. Make up weekly a small (or a large) bundle or box, and forward it to the Philadelphia Women's Auxiliary of the Sanitary Commission, 1307 Chestnut Street, where it will speedily find its way to Washington or to Louisville, and be distributed, in the shortest possible time, to those who need it most. Do not delay, and do not abandon your efforts after a short time. You must enlist in the work for the war. It is the women's part in the patriotic struggle we are in. As long as the men fight, the women must knit and sew, and the friends at home furnish means to alleviate the sorrows and wants of the camps and hospitals."

Letters or boxes intended for the Association should be addressed to Mrs. Bloomfield H. Moore, Corresponding Secretary, No. 1307 Chestnut Street.

The business of the Philadelphia Agency will hereafter be transacted in the same building, No. 1307 Chestnut Street (up stairs). Among other things it will have in special charge,—

1. *The Hospital Directory*, containing the names of the sick and wounded soldiers in all the military hospitals of this District. The list is corrected daily, and information in regard to any soldier will be furnished on application to the Superintendent.

2. *Special Relief* to discharged soldiers. This will be afforded by this Agency under the same conditions as it is dispensed in Washington.

3. It is in contemplation to establish here, under the auspices of the Commission, an Agency for the collection of the dues of the soldier, such as exists in Washington. The arrangements for that purpose are as yet incomplete.

All letters upon the general business of the Commission here, or of its Philadelphia Associates, should be addressed to Horace Binney, Jr., Esq., Chairman of the Executive Committee, No. 227 South Sixth Street. Letters upon the special departments of the Agency should be addressed to R. M. Lewis, Esq., General Superintendent, No. 1307 Chestnut Street.

Remittances to the treasury of the Philadelphia Associates, should be made to Caleb Cope, Esq., Treasurer, northeast corner of Sixth and Minor Streets, Philadelphia.

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